

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-19 are pending in the above-identified application, and were rejected. With this Amendment, no claims were amended, added or cancelled. Accordingly, claims 1-19 remain at issue in the above-identified application.

**I. 35 U.S.C. § 102 Anticipation Rejection of Claims**

Claims 1-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Mikurak (U.S. Patent No. 6,671,818). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.


The present application claims priority to Japanese Application No. 11-315901, filed on November 5, 1999. Applicant has amended the specification to contain a specific reference to this prior application. In addition, Applicant submits herewith a translation of the application with a statement that the translation is accurate to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.55. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that the effective date of the present application is November 5, 1999. Mikurak was filed on November 22, 1999. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that Mikurak does not qualify as a prior art reference, and respectfully requests withdrawal of this rejection.

**II. Conclusion**

In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicant submits that all claims are clearly allowable over the cited prior art, and respectfully requests early and favorable notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:   
Marina N. Saito  
Registration No. 42,121  
SONNENSCHNEIN NATH & ROSENTHAL LLP  
P.O. Box 061080  
Wacker Drive Station, Sears Tower  
Chicago, Illinois 60606-1080  
(312) 876-8000